**Mr. C. J. Mathew.**—(a) As the originals of questions formed part of the office file.

(b) No precedent of lending the originals of questions is forthcoming.

**Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.**—Is there any objection in giving copies if not originals?

**Mr. C. J. Mathew.**—I cannot give an off-hand reply. The matter will be considered.

**Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.**—Was there any previous instance where originals were supplied to the members?

**Mr. C. J. Mathew.**—None.

## Number of questions disallowed after 18th Meenam 1108.

162. **Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.**—Will the Government be pleased to state the total number of disallowed questions ever after 18th Meenam 1108?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—Since the subject of the question relates to the duties of the President, the Government did not consider it proper to call for details.

**Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.**—Will the answering of this question reflect any discredit on the President?

**President.**—That is no supplementary question. I disallow it.

**Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.**—Sir, does not this question ask for only certain facts? Does it in any way call in question the discretion used by the President? It can as well be that the Council Members do ask unnecessary questions or questions which do not come within the purview of the Council Rules and the President have disallowed them.

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—The Government thought it relates to the duty of the President and that therefore it will not be proper to ask the President or his office about this.

**Dr. A. R. Menon.**—We do not ask for the reason for disallowing questions. There is no disrespect to the President to say whether it is 29 or 45.

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—Whatever it be, the subject relates to the duty of the President, whether they are giving the number or not. Government will not be quite correct in asking for anything connected with the duty of the President in discharging functions of the Council.

**Dr. A. R. Menon.**—The question asked for is, will the Government be pleased to state the number of disallowed questions ever after 18th March 1933. There is no reflection at all about the President. I can understand if the reasons for the

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disallowance is asked for. What is the reason for refusing to give the number? The Government can very well get the number.

**Mr. K. G. Nayar.**—Sir, I wish to ask a question. In view of the answer given by the Hon'ble the Secretary to question No 159 to-day is there any objection for the Government to collect statistics relating to the number of disallowed questions in question No. 162? (*Hear, hear.*) To make the position very clear, for question No. 159 the Hon'ble the Secretary to the Council was pleased to answer that because it related to periods where the records were destroyed he could not supply the statistics. May I know from the Government whether that question is different from question No. 162?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—I stick to the position of the Government again. Since this is a subject relating to the duties of the President it is not proper for the Government to ask for it. This is not a matter relating to the working of the general administration or of any of the departments under the Diwan. It is absolutely disconnected with the Government as it is. It relates purely to the work of the President and the Government still hold the position that they cannot with propriety ask for any details connected with the work of that exalted office.

**Mr. A. Eachara Menon.**—Was not this question admitted by the President?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—Yes.

**Mr. K. G. Nayar.**—Are we to take it that the opinion of the Government is different from the answer given by the Secretary to the Diwan?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—It must be a slip somewhere.

**Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.**—Sir, we are only asking for the number of questions disallowed by the President.

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—The admitting and non-admitting of questions is a duty of the President and a figure collected about the work of the President will certainly affect the functions of the President in that connection.

**Mr. A. Eachara Menon.**—Why should the Government answer a question that has already been accepted by the President?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—The President accepted the question because he found in it nothing contrary to the rules. But the Government consider it improper to refer to the President any matter that affects the duties of the President.

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**Mr. K. G. Nayar.**—Is there any law which says Government should not answer such questions.

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—I do not think that we did it under any law.

**Mr. George Chakyamuri.**—Who decided it?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—The Government.

**Dr. A. R. Menon,**—I suppose then that we cannot ask for even the number of clerks employed in the President's Office.

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**— It is a hypothetical question and I cannotanswer that.

**Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.**—Is there any rule entitling the Government to refuse to give such an answer.

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—The Government have answered it in thebest of their light. They thought that it is not proper on thepart of the Government to enquire about the work of the President.

**Mr. K. G. Nayar.**—Will the Government be pleased to state whether the mere giving of a nmerical figure reflects upon the duties ofthe President?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—I do not say that it reflects on the President. Only the Government are not inclined to collect any details.

**Mr. K. G. Nayar.**—Any reasons for this, Sir?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran**—It is not proper.

**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—Does not the Government think that it is necessary to know these details, to know how the right of interpellation has been utilised by the Members of this Council?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—The answer is, the answer given to the queston.

**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—Does not the Government think it desirable to know how the right of interpellation is utilised by the members. It is not a question of ascertaining the duties of the President. It is a matter of general importance to all Cochinites and to the Government to know how the members are exercising this power. It is very necessary to know the proportion of allowed and disallowed questions in this connection. I submit it is a matter of general public importance.

We want theGovernment to understand that it is a matter of supreme importance for the Government and the people at large to know how the right of interpellation has been exercised by the Members of this House. For this, a number of questions disallowed is of great importance. I do not know how the Government should shirk it. Is it not a matter of all-

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Cochin importance? We are not at all questioning the duties or functions of the President.

**Mr. C. J. Mathew.**—Questions of this nature are not answered in the Madras Legislative Council. This matter was referred to the Secretary to the Legislative Council, Madras.

**Mr. George Chakyamuri.**—Will the Hon'ble Member please read that letter?

**Mr. C. J. Mathew.**—May I read the letter from Madras?

**President.**—Yes.

**Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.**—Before that, will the Secretary please read the letter he wrote from here?

**Mr. C. J. Mathew.**—Yes. "Dear Sir, I shall thank you to kindly let me know whether questions from non-official members regarding statistics relating to the number of questions disallowed by the President or questions relating to the actions of the President (both from inside and outside the Council) are admitted there to be answered by the Government in the Council, during question-time."

To this letter, I received the following reply.—

"Dear Sir, With reference to your letter dated the 5th June 1933 I am to inform you that no question about the statistics relating to the number of questions disallowed by the Hon'ble the President of this Council, has ever been put and that under the Rules and Standing Orders such a question is not admissible. Under the Rules and Standing Orders a question has to be addressed to a Member of Government and has to relate to a matter within his special cognizance. A question about the number of interpellations disallowed by the President would not answer this description.

The Hon'ble the President, however, at the end of the each session announces in the Council details about questions asked, admitted, disallowed, answered and unanswered. I may invite your attention to such an announcement in the proceedings of this Council dated 25th March 1933."

**Mr. C. A. Ouseph.**—May I know whether similar questions have not been answered in this very Council in previous meetings?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—Sir, I do not say that it is not an important matter. But I persist in saying that it is all the more important in the interests of the public as well as in the interests of this House that the duties of the President should never be enquired into by anybody here.

**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—Government should not take it so indiscriminately. Will the Government be pleased to have a reconsideration of this matter in view of the non-official majority of this Council or whether the Government still adhere to its considered opinion?

**Mr. George Chakyamuri.**—Non-official unanimity.

**President.**—I would advice you to bring a motion or resolution.

**Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.**—It would also be disallowed.

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**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—We want it to be distinctly understood that this is no matter of trivial importance. The members have got the right of interpellation and the knowledge of how that has beenexercised is a matter of very great importance.

**President.**—It will be noted in the Council Proceedings.

**Mr. C. A. Ouseph.**—My question has not been answered yet. I want to know whether this very question has been answered in the 2nd and 3rd meetings of the Council?

**Mr. C. J. Mathew.**—I want notice.

**President.**—Please state the definite question that has to be answered by the Government.

**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—Will the Government be pleased to state whether it does not consider it a matter of importance to ascertain how the non-official Members of the Council have exercised their right of interpellation.

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—I have answered that it is all the more important that the Government should not ask the President for any information or in any way try to collect any information with regard to the working of his office.

**Dr. A. R. Menon.**—Asking the President to furnish certain information is not loss of prestige.

**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—May I know, Sir, under what rule does the Government feel this delicacy?

**Rama Varmha Tampuran.**—I am not aware of any such rules.

**Mr. M. Krishna Menon.**—When in Madras Legislative Council these things are published voluntarily, why not the Cochin Government do it on asking?

**Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.**—We want to know from the Government why they should stand upon this considered loss of prestige?

**President.**—I will see that this House is furnished with accurate details as to the number of questions put and the number of questions disallowed on Saturday. I promise full and complete information on the point raised by the Leader of the Progressive Party.

**Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.**—For your information, Sir, I shall tell you that Mr. P. Krishna Menon is the Leader of the Progressive Party. You have been making references to Mr. Poduval as the Leader of the Party.

**President.**—Thank you for the information. I thought my old friend was the Leader.

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